

“I don’t want to be the governor who has to hold my granddaughter’s hand as we walk past the liquor bottles on our way to the toy aisle in WalMart, or towards the cereal in Food Lion. That isn’t North Carolina. That isn’t who we are or what we want to become,” said Perdue.

Right now, North Carolina is tied for 44<sup>th</sup> in per capita liquor consumption, one of the lowest in the nation. And last year the state made a profit to the general fund of \$200 million and local governments a profit of \$51 million.

With this information, Gov. Perdue expressed serious concerns about the privatizing North Carolina’s ABC system.

North Carolina’s ABC Commission is compiling its final data now, which will be shared with the membership of the General Assembly.

“I invite our Legislative leaders to sit down with me and my staff to hear a presentation from the valuation company to learn firsthand what options are available. But I suspect they will find what I did: the juice isn’t worth the squeeze,” Perdue said.

In making a decision, Gov. Perdue also considered the incidents in Charlotte, Wilmington and Greensboro over misuse of funds and acceptance of gifts which exposed a problem within the ABC system.

Following those incidents and as part of her Setting Government Straight initiative, Gov. Perdue signed significant legislation last session to bring a new ethical-standards charge to those who serve on local ABC boards.

“The current ABC system, especially with the new ethical standards in place, is well-run, and gives us the 3<sup>rd</sup> best excise revenue in the country,” Gov. Perdue said today. “I am still looking for new and innovative ways to set government straight and tackle our budget issues, but for me, today, selling the ABC system just isn’t the right way.”

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